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- THE HOLY QUR'AN: THE SOURCE OF MORAL GUIDANCE
 - 'ALLĀMA AMINI
- KISSING THE SHRINES OF THE INFALLIBLES (P.B.U.T.)
- MARRIAGE: AGGRESSION OR AFFECTION?
- HOW WILL PEOPLE BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT ON DOOMSDAY?



Contents

3	MORAL GEMS IN THE QUR'AN THE HOLY QUR'AN: THE SOURCE OF MORAL GUIDANCE
5	OCCASIONAL NOTE 'ALLĀMA AMINI
7	IN STEP WITH THE SUN KISSING THE SHRINES OF THE INFALLIBLES (P.B.U.T.)
9	Q & A CORNER MARRIAGE: AGGRESSION OR AFFECTION?
11	ISLAMIC BELIEFS HOW WILL PEOPLE BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT ON DOOMSDAY?
13	READ ONE BOOK PER WEEK ANECDOTES OF THE AHLUL BAYT
14	O' ALLAH! I ASK YOU... THIS IS MY ALLEGIANCE TO MY MASTER (MAY ALLAH HASTEN HIS ADVENT)



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THE HOLY QUR'AN: THE SOURCE OF MORAL GUIDANCE

فَإِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلّٰتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ

“Indeed this Qur'an guides to what is most suitable.” (17:9)

It goes without saying that as Muslims we realise the many purposes the holy Qur'an serves. The Qur'an is the everlasting miracle of Islam. It is a manual for life, a reference for historical events, a literary masterpiece, a source of spiritual guidance, a book of law and a lesson for living.

As Muslims we devote much of our time to learning about the Qur'an. We understand how frequently the Qur'an reminds us of fundamental human virtues, like correct conduct and being wary of Allah's presence in our lives, i.e. *taqwā*.

When Almighty Allah sent down prophets (P.B.U.T.), prior to them instructing people about anything, they focused on self-building and moral virtues. The Qur'an and the Messenger of Islam, Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H. & H.H.), is no exemption to this. The Qur'an has a central focus, and that is the betterment of human society, and it is advancing our moral state that will allow us to achieve this.

Morals, which is defined as a set of principles that organise our way of conduct and social interactions, turns us into productive individuals and healthy societies. When we strengthen our social ties with others, and build greater personal characteristics, we will reach the ideal society we all wish we had.

It is for this reason that we must turn to the Qur'an to learn what it has to offer in the area of moral advancement. The Qur'an invites us to the highest level of morality, or *akhlāq* (sing. *khuluq*), and to manifest ourselves with the greatest of qualities.

What better moral guide can we have than the Qur'an? This verse tells us that the noble Book of Allah is the source of guidance to the right path, which is the path of monotheism and true faith in the Almighty. There are numerous places where the Qur'an talks about guidance (*hidāya*), and how one can be directed to the light of salvation, but ultimately it is the Qur'an that will be the absolute and true guidance for all.

There are numerous trends and different paths, but the Almighty says the Qur'an will guide us to the 'most suitable' (*aqwam*), so if we want to be guided

we surpass the suitable and aim at the most suitable. Through the Qur'an's guidance we will understand true *Tawhīd*, we will reach complete faith, and we will also have the best of this world and the hereafter.

The Qur'an has always and will always be the primary source for our moral guidance and inspiration. And how can we take the Qur'an as a source of guidance and not refer to those who carried the Qur'an—the *Ahl al-Bayt* (P.B.U.T.)? They are completely joined to the Qur'an, as this *hadīth* from Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) says, “Almighty Allah purified us [the *Ahl al-Bayt* (P.B.U.T.)], made us infallible, and placed us as witnesses over His creation and His authority on His earth. The Almighty appointed us with the Qur'an and appointed the Qur'an with us; we will never be separated from it and it will never be separated from us.”¹

* By: Dr. Sh. Zaid Al-Salami

1. Kulaynī, *Al-Kāfi*, (Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmīya Publication), vol. 1, p. 191, *Hadīth* 415.





OCCASIONAL NOTE

‘ALLĀMA AMINI

Birth

‘Abdul-Husayn Amini, also known as ‘Allāma Amini was a great Shī‘a jurist, *hadīth* writer, *hadīth* scholar, theologian, historian, codicologist and one of the great Shī‘a scholars. He was born in Tabriz¹ in 1902 to a family celebrated for religious learning.² His father was a religious leader in Tabriz and his grandfather was known as *Amīn al-Sharī‘* (the Protector of the *Shari‘a*), hence his family name was called ‘Amini’.

1. A big city in the northwestern of Iran.

2. Husayni Dashti, *Ma ‘ārif wa Ma ‘ārif*, (Mu’assisi-yi Tahqīqāt wa Nashr Ma‘ārif, Ahl al-Bayt Publication), vol. 2, p. 550.

Education

‘Allāma Amini started his education in the schools of Tabriz and after memorizing the Qur’ān and finishing the elementary level, he went to Najaf and started his studies of *Fiqh* and *Uṣūl*.¹ Coming back from Najaf to Tabriz, he found himself heir to the influence and standing of his father, but he preferred the scholarly atmosphere of Najaf; returning there, he embarked on a career of research and authorship.

Works

Despite his competence in *Fiqh*, he was primarily interested in the traditions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) and the Imams (P.B.U.T.); all he wrote was inspired by an intense devotion to the concept of *wilāya*. His first book, *Shuhadā’ al-Faḍila*, published in Najaf in 1936, was received with great acclaim, and he began to be called ‘Allāma at the early age of thirty-five. But the work that occupied more than forty years of his life and definitively assured his fame was *al-Ghadīr*, a massive examination of the tradition according to which the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) appointed ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) as his immediate successor. He has also many other well-known books.

Establishment of *Amīr al-Mu’mīnīn* (P.B.U.H.) Library

The public library of *Amīr al-Mu’mīnīn* (P.B.U.H.) in Najaf was inaugurated in 1959 by ‘Allāma Amini. This library included 500,000 books in different languages and around 70,000 manuscripts.² ‘Allāma Amini has donated all the books of his personal library—which were around five to six thousand books—to this library.

Death

This great Shī‘a scholar passed away in 1970. Some have regarded the cause of his death—despite having a robust and healthy body—due to severe study and his total dedication to writing and taking care of the library task.³

1. Husayni Dashti, *Ma‘ārif wa Ma‘ārif*, (Mu’assisi-yi Tahqīqāt wa Nashr Ma‘ārif, Ahl al-Bayt Publication), vol. 2, p. 550.

2. Lutfi, ‘Allāma Amīnī: Jur‘i-yi Nūsh-i Ghadīr, (Ansārī Publication), p. 63.

3. Taken from: Hakimi, *Yād-nāmī-yi ‘Allāma Amīnī*, (Būstān-i Kitāb Publication); Rāzī, *Ganjīni-yi dānishmandān*, (Islāmīyī Publication); www.en.wikishia.net.



IN STEP WITH THE SUN

KISSING THE SHRINES OF THE INFALLIBLES (P.B.U.T.)

JULY 6: INTERNATIONAL KISSING DAY

Some opponents of *Ahl al-Bayt* (P.B.U.T.) protest against the act of kissing the shrines of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.). They deem it an innovation. According to them, kissing the shrine is in reality kissing the metal of the tomb and will not benefit the person in any way. Therefore, it will not lead to the acceptance of entreaties. Although there are abundant answers to their criticism, here are a few valid replies.

Channel of Expressing Love

People visiting the shrines kiss them and are fully aware that they are made of molded metal. They agree that silver or iron has no connection with the acceptance of entreaties. However, since the person they are visiting is no longer alive and

contact with him is not possible, they kiss the shrine as a sign of benediction. It is a channel of expressing their love.

Seeking Blessings (*Tabarruk*)

Seeking blessings through the remnants (and symbols) of the saints of Allah (P.B.U.T.) is not a new phenomenon among Muslims; rather, this behavior can be traced back to the prophets' (P.B.U.T.) lives. For example in the holy Qur'an we read that when prophet Joseph (P.B.U.H.) introduced himself to his brothers and forgave them, he said, "Take this shirt of mine, and cast it upon my father's face; he will regain his sight." (12:93). Then, the Qur'an recounts, "When the bearer of good news arrived, he cast it on his face, and he regained his sight." (12:96). Also no one doubts that while circumambulating the *Ka'ba*, the holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) used to touch or kiss the Black Stone.

Holiness

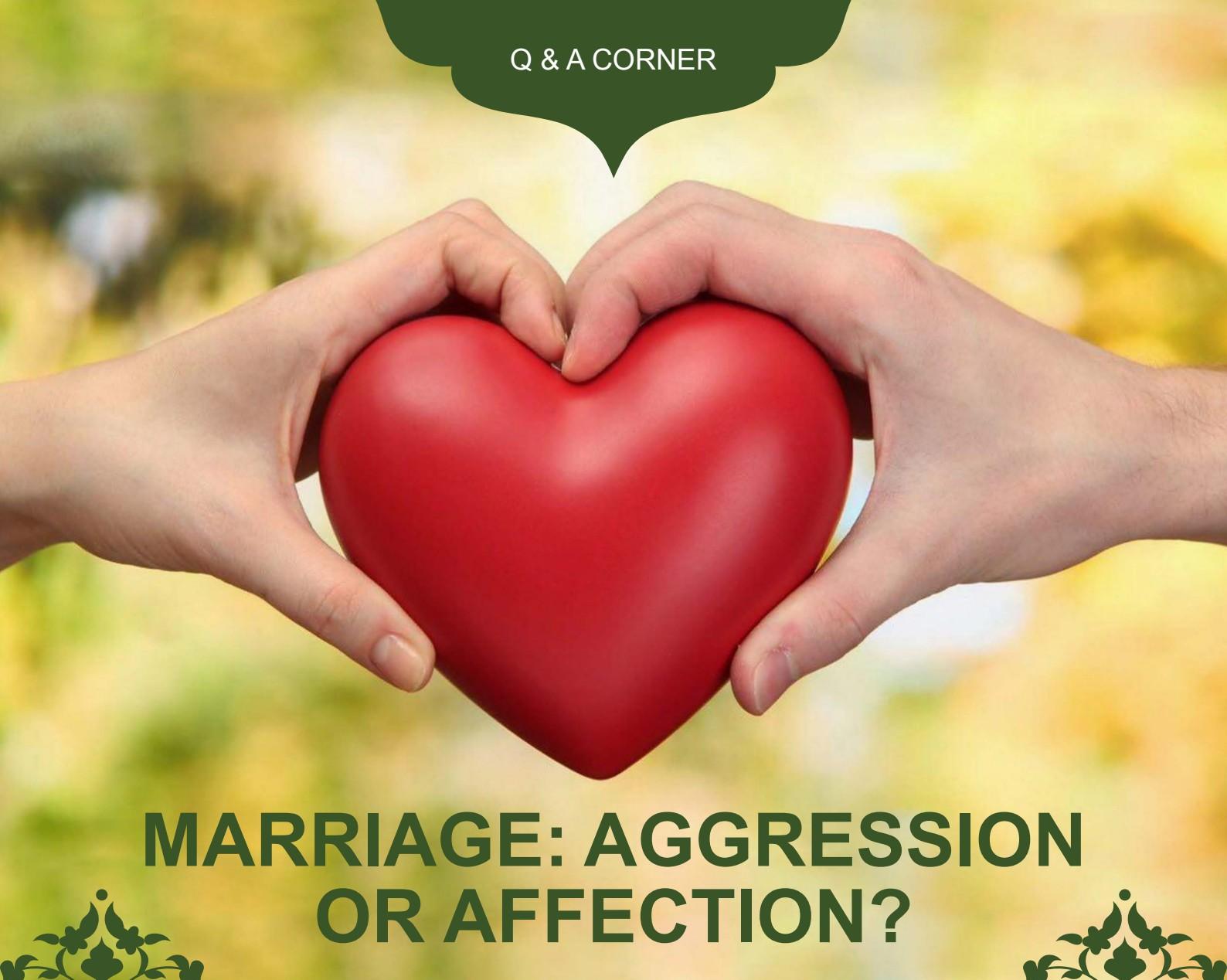
Kissing the Shrines of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) is similar to kissing the cover of the holy Qur'an which contains the word of Allah, with no difference whatsoever. Kissing the golden or silver surfaces of the latticework that covers their graves, is only done as a tribute to those whose purity are housed there, those people who bore the Islamic message and strove the hardest to make the word of Allah.

Conclusion

In general term, kissing the shrine of the Infallibles (P.B.U.T.) is not a form of *shirk* (polytheism), because kissing or holding the shrines or graves is not worshipping the graves or the owners of the graves, rather, it is an attempt to benefit from the holiness bestowed on the buried infallible (P.B.U.H.) and his grave by Allah.¹

1. Taken from: Sharif al-Qarashi, 'Umar Kumu trans., *This Is Shi'ism: (An Objective Study)*, (Al-Rafed Electronic Publishing); Husayni Nasab, Mansoor L. Limba trans., *The Shia Rebuts*, (Ahlul Bayt World Assembly), pp. 72-75.





MARRIAGE: AGGRESSION OR AFFECTION?

Question: Through the mercy of Allah, I converted to Islam two years ago. Next, I am thinking of marrying, but frankly, I'm a bit worried. I've heard many negative things about the way Muslim men behave toward their wives. I know that as a Muslim, it is better that I marry, yet I don't want to enter a relationship in which I might be disrespected or abused. Does Islam really allow husbands to disrespect and abuse their wives?

Answer: Dear reader, I can understand your concerns. No one wishes to enter a relationship that might cause pain and stress. First, let's see what the Qur'an and *hadīth* say about marriage and marital bliss. According to the Glorious Qur'an, marriage is meant to be a source of comfort and love. "And among His signs is that He created for you mates from your own selves that you may *take comfort* in them and *He ordained affection and mercy between you*. There are indeed signs in that for a people who reflect." (30:21) So you see the very purpose of marriage is to enjoy that love, to find a merciful heart to relate to, and ultimately, to live a tranquil life.

As for how wives are to be treated, the Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) recommended that a man speak endearingly toward his wife saying, “When a man tells his wife ‘I love you’, these words will stay in her heart forever.”¹ Likewise, Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) noted that a man should be considerate toward his wife in all situations, and to speak well toward her so that she might lead a happy life.²

So, if Islam prescribes this kind of loving attitude between spouses, why do we often see otherwise? A Muslim man, or any man, who is disrespectful or aggressive toward his wife, has a problem. The problem does not lie within the religion of Islam and its teachings; rather it lies within the individual himself who acts outside the Islamic law, outside of the natural order ordained by Allah.

Consider this: Islam lays out the best possible way of living, explains morals and behaviors that will lead the person to eternal fulfillment and success. How much a person or even an ethnic or national group follows this plan of living is a

different story. The way a person is raised, his or her genetic endowment, and even the cultural environment in which one lives may predispose a person to act in ways that are less than perfect. We should not take the mistakes of one Muslim, or even of a group of Muslims, to be reflective of the true Islam. In other words, let’s not form our concept of Islam by reflecting on the behaviors of some Muslims. Rather, let’s strive to make our own behaviors reflect the truth of Islam.

And in regard to marriage, rest assured that Islam espouses full respect toward women, and prizes the loving, warm relationship between a couple. You might even want to discuss this with any future marital prospect, perhaps share some reading material on this or meet with an Islamic counselor, to be sure that you are both on the same page about this before embarking on the beautiful journey of family life!

* Do you have a question you would like to be answered? We will not be able to answer every question but will choose the most commonly asked ones for a response.

* By: Dr. Z. D’Elia



HOW WILL PEOPLE BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT ON DOOMSDAY?

How will People be Taken into Account on Doomsday?

As stated in No. 105, the Resurrection has several stages which are very difficult for a person to cross easily. Considering the significance of this issue, we will now discuss some of these stages in greater detail.

Stage of Reckoning (*Hisāb*)

One of the significant stations of the Day of Judgment is the Stage of Reckoning (*Hisāb*) as one of its names is ‘*Yawm al-Hisāb*’ (38:16). In this Day, the elements of good and evil actions will be weighed and whichever outweighs the other will determine man’s destiny. This is because, the Almighty is *al-Hasib* (The Accounter) (4:86; 33:39). Hence, we must be absolutely aware, because the Judge is completely observant of us. As Imam ‘Alī (P.B.U.H.) said, “Beware of disobeying Allah in solitude, because the Witness (of that situation) is also the Judge.”¹ Three things make the reckoning easier in the hereafter, “Giving to the one who has deprived you, communicating with the one who broke up with you, forgiving the one who has wronged you.”² It is also said that, “the reckoning is based on the amount of the people’s intellect.”³

Stage of Scroll of Deeds (*Sahīfat al-A‘māl*)

The next step in the Resurrection Day, is the Stage of Scroll of Deeds (*Sahīfat al-A‘māl*). In this Stage all recorded actions of the human being, good and bad, will be presented in detail, which makes it a surprise to humans (18:49). The Qur’an tells us that, there are two angels that always accompany the human being who inscribe good and bad deeds (82:10-11). The Qur’an refers to the inscribers of actions as ‘*mutalaqqiyān*’ (the twin recorders) (50:17), ‘*Raqib*’ (observer), ‘*Atid*’ (prepared to record) (50:18), and ‘*kirāman kātibīn*’ (noble writers) (82:11). It is related that the angels record good deeds immediately, but they record bad actions a little bit later to allow the guilty to repent or wipe out the effects of the bad deeds.⁴

1. Sharīf Radī, Sayyid Ali Reza trans., *Nahj al-Balāgha*, (Anṣārīān Publication), Part 2, Saying 334.

2. Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, (Al-Wafā Foundation), vol. 7, p. 96.

3. Kulaynī, *Al-Kāfi*, (Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyya Publication), vol. 1, p. 11.

4. Ṣadūq, *Beliefs*, (Nihdat-i Zanān-i Musalmān Publication), p. 80.

Stage of Witnesses

Just as in the worldly courts, there are many witnesses in the Judgment Day’s court who testify in favor or disfavor of the human being. According to the Qur’anic teachings, the Doomsday’s witnesses are Allah Almighty (22:17), the holy prophets, particularly the noble Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.T.) (16:89), the holy Imams (P.B.U.T.) (9:105), the angels (50:21), the Earth (99:4), the soul (17:14), and human’s body organs (24:24).

Spring of Kawthar

The other Stage of the Doomsday is the Spring of Kawthar. Both Shī‘a and Sunnī have narrated that on the Day of Judgment, the holy Qur’an and *Ahl al-Bayt* (P.B.U.T.) and the believers will meet the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) next to the pond, the Spring of Kawthar, as the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) Said, “I am leaving for you two precious things and if you adhere to them both, you will never go astray after me. They are the Book of Allah and my Progeny, that is my *Ahl al-Bayt*. The two shall never separate from each other until they come to me by the Fountain (of Paradise).”⁵ According to the narrations the hypocrites and the heretics can’t meet the Prophet (P.B.U.H. & H.H.) near the Fountain.⁶

*Compiled and Translated by Mohammad Javad Norouzi

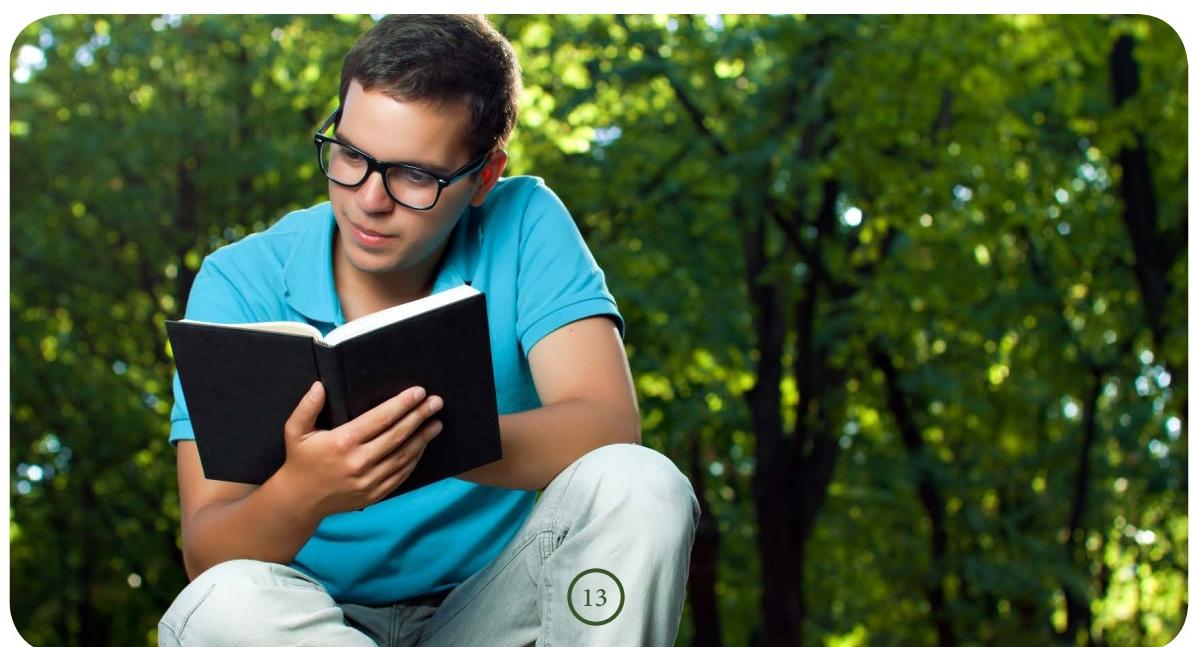
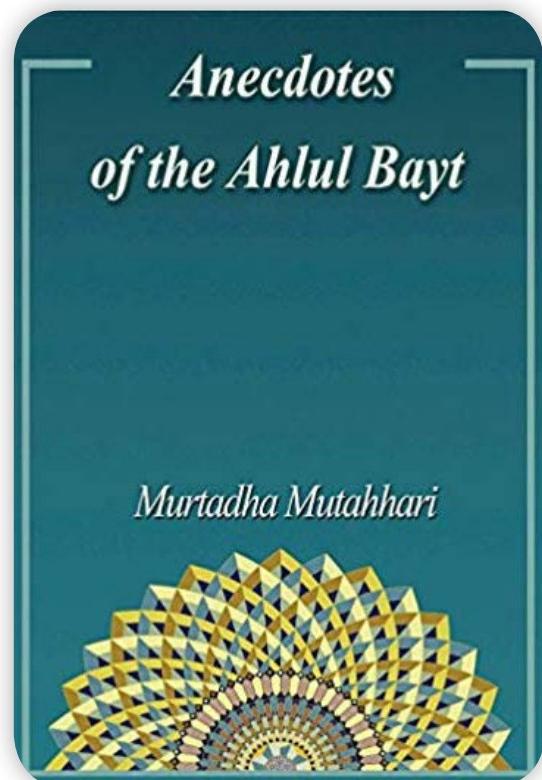
READ ONE BOOK PER WEEK

ANECDOTES OF THE AHLUL BAYT

This text is a compilation of incidents, narrations and teachings from the lives of the 14 infallibles (P.B.U.T.) which help us in living our lives in total accordance with the laws of Islam. In this collection, Āyatullāh Mutahhari only used reports that he found credible and which came from reliable sources. This book was written to share a vision of greatness, presented by those who did not sin because they feared that destination, and despite trials and tribulations, opted for eternal life rather than eternal damnation. Their immortality is before you. Today, centuries later, they survive as symbols of nobility and perfection. Their power to influence even now, is greater than that of one living amidst us.¹



1. Mutahhari, Iffat Shah trans., *Anecdotes of The Ahlul Bayt*, pp. 1-4.



O' ALLAH! I ASK YOU...

THIS IS MY ALLEGIANCE TO MY MASTER (May Allah hasten his advent)

اللَّهُمَّ بَلْغُ مَوْلَايِ صَاحِبَ الْزَّمَانِ صَلَواتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ، عَنْ جَمِيعِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمَنَاتِ فِي مَشَارِقِ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغارِبِهَا، وَبِرَّهَا وَبَحْرَهَا، وَسَهْلَهَا وَجَبَلَهَا، خَيْرَهُمْ وَمَيْتَهُمْ، وَعَنْ وَالدِّيَ وَوَالدِّيَ، وَعَنِ الْمَسَلَوَاتِ وَالْتَّعَبَاتِ زِنَةُ عَرْشِ اللَّهِ، وَمِدَادُ كَلِمَاتِهِ، وَمَنْتَهَى رِضَاهُ، وَعَذَّدَ مَا أَحْصَاهُ كَتَبَهُ، وَأَحَاطَ بِهِ عِلْمُهُ.

O' Allah! (Please) Convey to my master the Patron of the Age, Allah's blessings be upon him, on behalf of all the believing men and women in the east and west sides of the earth, in its lands and oceans, in its plains and mountains, and both the alive and the dead, and on behalf of my

parents, my descendants, and me, (convey to him) such blessings and greetings that are as heavy as the measure of the Throne of Allah, as much as the ink of His words, as endless as His pleasure, and as many as all that which has been calculated by His Books and comprehended by His knowledge.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَجَدَّ لَهُ فِي هَذَا الْيَوْمِ، وَفِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ غَهْدًا وَغَدْرًا وَبَيْعَةً لَهُ فِي رَقْبِي.

O' Allah! On this day and on all days I renew to him a pledge, a covenant, and an allegiance to which I commit up to my neck.

اللَّهُمَّ كَمَا شَرَّفْتَنِي بِهَذَا الشَّرِيفِ، وَفَضَّلْتَنِي بِهَذِهِ الْفَضْيَلَةِ، وَخَاصَّنِي بِهَذِهِ النِّعْمَةِ، فَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مَوْلَايِ وَسَيِّدِي صَاحِبِ الْزَّمَانِ، وَأَعْلَمْنِي مِنْ أَنْصَارِهِ وَأَشْياعِهِ وَالْمَذَاهِبِ، وَأَجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الْمُسْتَشْهَدِينَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ، طَائِعًا غَيْرَ مُكَرَّهٍ فِي الصَّفَّ الْأَدِيْنِ. نَعَثُ أَهْلَهُ فِي كِتَابِكَ، فَقُلْتُ (صَفَّ كَانُوكُمْ بَيْنَ مَرْصُوصٍ) عَلَى طَاعَتِكَ، وَطَاعَةَ رَسُولِكَ وَآلِهِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.

O' Allah! Just as You have bestowed me with this honor, conferred upon me this virtue, and granted me exclusively this bounty, so also (please send blessings upon my master and chief, the patron of the age, and make me of his supporters, adherents, and defenders, and make me of those who will be martyred in his presence, with full willingness and without compulsion, in the line whose people have been described in Your Book where You say, "... one line as if they were a firm and compact wall," (61:4) and with obedience to You and obedience to Your Messenger and his household, peace be upon them.

اللَّهُمَّ هَذِهِ بَيْعَةٌ لَهُ فِي عَنْقِي إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ!

O' Allah! This is my allegiance to him, to which I pledge my life, up to the Resurrection Day.²

1. You may then slap your right hand on the left as if you are swearing allegiance.

2. Qumī, Badr Shahīn trans., *Mafātīḥ al-Jinān*, (Anṣārīān Publication): *Ziyāra* of our master, the patron of the Age (May Allah hasten his advent), which is advisably said after every dawn (*fajr*) prayer, vol. 2, pp. 753-755.